

# theists

# United

## A RATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

## Teacher Learns a Lesson From the History Books

Co-President's Message



I have always maintained that schools should be free of religious proselytizing and that teachers should neither promote nor attack religion. However, now that I have been a teacher for these many months, I have a confession to make: I have not always kept my atheism at home.

This doesn't mean that I have actively proselytized to my youngsters (middle and high school age). However, I have noticed quite a few things during the course of my teaching that have given me pause to re-think my position and try to level the playing field a bit.

I am a substitute teacher. In that capacity, I have had occasion to visit quite a few schools and teach quite a few subjects. Some of the classes I've taught include history, social studies, music, algebra, PE, general science, biology, and even Verdugo Hills High School's Academic Decathlon. First the good news: I have yet to see the subject of evolution

vs. creationism as a subject for debate. The biology and science textbooks I've seen have all been quite good in presenting evolutionary principles in a clear and thorough manner. Not one of these even mentions creationism. Moreover, the science teachers I've met have been quite steadfast in saying that as far as they are concerned, there is no controversy; it's simply something that doesn't come up. More good news: None of the

students seemed to have a problem with evolution when I brought it up; I expected to hear at least a few young voices raised in opposition. I didn't find any textbook pages glued together to keep the kids from hearing the "sinful" ideas of evolution, a situation that seems to be rather common in certain other states in the union.

*"Nothing is presented that is the least bit controversial; Jesus is treated as an actual historical figure..."*

Polytechnic High School in Sun Valley. It was test day, and all I had to do was administer the tests. Well, as luck would have it, the test was on the First World War and one of the

However, history is a bit different. I am, after all, primarily a history and music teacher, and most of my assignments are in this area. One of the first history assignments I had was at my old alma mater,

I had was at my old alma mater, Polytechnic High School in Sun Valley. It was test day, and all I had to do was administer the tests. Well, as luck would have it, the test was on the First World War and one of the

*Continued on page 2*

### July General Meeting

Sunday, July 23, 2000

#### Atheists Speak Out!

Members of AU exercise their golden tongues at our annual speech contest in the July 23 AU meeting. Speakers in each of two categories, (5-7 minute and 1-2 minute speeches) will vie for your interest and the judges' accolades. This meeting always brings a variety of new and provocative ideas, and members always leave with something new to think about.

The meeting will be in the Center for Inquiry West, 5519 Grosvenor Blvd., in the Marina area of Los Angeles.

The board meeting will start at 11:00 a.m., with members' concerns the main item on the agenda. (Another board meeting will convene at CFIW at 11 a.m. on the second Sunday of each month. This month that will be July 9. Members are welcome to attend that meeting.)

The social period will begin at 12:30.

The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. with announcements and the speaker, followed by a break. Questions and answers will follow the break. We'll have discussion and reports, then sound-off before adjourning. Those who wish will reconvene for after-meeting eating at Dinah's, 6521 S. Sepulveda Blvd., LA.

**Are you young and rational?**

**Do you feel like everyone your age  
is out finding Christ?**

*NO, we're not! Some of us are finding  
coffee and conversation at*

**AyoUth Coffee Night**

8:00 p.m. Mondays at Lulu's Alibi  
1640 Sawtelle Bl., just south of Santa Monica Bl.

For more information call

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or

Matt  
(310) 993-4876

# What is An Atheist?

By Harvey Tippit

What is an atheist? This is a trite question. We atheists have probably given some serious thought to the definition of what we profess. But we have long since heard the answer, and it is so natural, so simple and so conventional that we can recite what an atheist is without taxing our cerebral cortex.

An atheist is a person who is not a theist. Atheism is the absence of theism. Case closed.

Atheism so considered seems a denial, a negative. It is a nugatory value, something below zero. Does that definition fully define us: the absence of theism? Others are theists; we are not.

But does a statement of what we are NOT constitute a statement of what we are? Are there multiple categories of what a person, who is not a theist, might be?

*Continued on page 7*

## CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 1*

questions read: "Whose side was God on in World War One?" First of all, I was struck with the stupidity of the question, and didn't make too much effort to hide my feelings about it. One of the students asked out loud: "Mr. Nelson, are you religious?" I told him that my views on religion were not important; what was important was how they interpreted the question.

That incident was not too bad, but I did notice that the textbook they were using had a number of positive religious references. I noticed this in other history textbooks not only at this school, but at others as well. Then I was given a long assignment at Olive Vista Middle School in Sylmar. This school uses one primary history book for both sixth and seventh graders, and it covers the ancient and medieval worlds. I read the chapters on the emergence of Christianity with great interest. Nothing is presented that is the least bit controversial; Jesus is treated as an actual historical figure, and the decline of the Roman Empire is presented without even considering Christianity as a possible causative factor in the intellectual stagnation that soon embraced Europe.

I soon had enough. When I presented this material, I gave my own spin on things as much as I could without appearing to be a "fire-breathing" atheist (which of course I am!). I told the kids that I was not attacking anyone's religious views, but was simply presenting the historical record as I understood it. I mentioned that there is no evidence outside of the Bible that anyone named Jesus actually lived; it is a question of faith and not fact. I pointed out contradictions in the gospels. I pointed out how corrupt the papacy has been throughout its history (again, I told the students that I was not attacking the Catholic Church, but simply presenting history).

I was occasionally surprised by the responses. For example, when I mentioned that one of the Renaissance popes spoke of the "fable of Christ", a student asked if this pope was an atheist. At this point, a young man in the back of the room yelled out: "Yeah! Atheists rule."

Maybe there is hope for our young people!

*Jon Nelson*

### Atheists United, Inc.

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ATHEISTS UNITED is a 501 (C)(3) not-for-profit educational organization with two purposes: 1. Preserving the separation of church and state; and 2. Promoting atheism, primarily through education.

The *Atheists United Newsletter* is published monthly for members and is also available by subscription. Deadline for submissions is the first day of the month prior to publication, otherwise at the discretion of the editor. Submissions should be no more than 500 words long and are subject to editorial revisions, at the discretion of the editor, for reasons of clarity or space. Send all material to Editor's attention by mail to AU, P.O. Box 57435, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-2435, or by email to [bkirkhart@aol.com](mailto:bkirkhart@aol.com), or by fax to 818-785-1743. Opinions and statements made by authors may not reflect the positions of Atheists United and are therefore not the responsibility of Atheists United, its officers, directors, nor editor. All material © 2000 by Atheists United. All rights reserved. Permission to use articles is explicitly granted to the editorial staffs of member organizations of the Atheist Alliance and of the Alliance of Freethought Organizations of Southern California. Credit should be given, and a copy is requested for our files. U.S. Postal Bulk Rate Permit No. 888, Van Nuys, California.

Atheists United

P. O. Box 57435 • Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-2435

Atheist Information Line: (818) 785 - 1743

Calls are machine-answered with a short message about our next open meeting. Messages may be left and will be relayed to the appropriate officer.

# Book Review

*Christianity and Incest* by Annie Imbens and Ineke Jonker. Published 1992 by Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Minn. ISBN: 0-8006-2541-2 298 pages

*Reviewed by Elaine Nelson*

Rarely does a book come along that has enough courage to question the tenets of Christianity and its negative ramifications. *Christianity and Incest* is such a book. In it, the authors (in what may be a unique study) try to determine whether a correlation exists between a strictly Christian religious upbringing and sexual abuse of young girls in the family.

The authors focus on girls rather than boys because the numbers of abuses are substantially higher with girls. In the Netherlands, where the studies were conducted, the estimates range between five and fifteen percent for girls, and one percent for boys. No research was done to determine whether strictly religious families have higher sexual abuse rates than moderately and/or non-religious families, as that was not the purpose of the book.

The focus is on ten women interviewed by the authors, all of whom were between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-seven. No one under the age of twenty was interviewed, as the authors were uncertain about the potentially negative affects of the study on younger participants. All of the women in the study were sexually abused as children. With one exception, all the subjects came from strictly religious families. The one non-religious woman who was studied came from a male dominated, patriarchal familial upbringing.

Two primary questions are examined. One, how can the sexual abuse of girls occur in Christian families, and two, what is the impact of a religious upbringing in the family, school, and church on these girls. While seeking answers to the first question, they found that these women were victims of a strongly patriarchal upbringing by their parents who both stressed and practiced the belief that men are superior to women and that women should be subservient to men at all times. This belief is taught, reinforced and justified through the sexist dogmas of the Christian Bible, churches, and schools. All of these display a strongly anti-woman bias and tend to condemn women as innately inferior. The authors believe that there is a definite relationship between these views and sexual abuse in families, as fathers and brothers believe that, since the Bible and church teach that men are the head of the family and women are no more than possessions, the men are free to do as they please. These men use various Biblical passages and church teachings as justification for abusing girls and also to keep them quiet so they will not report the abuses. Although the authors do not believe that religion propagates a patriarchal mentality with the intent of stimulating men to sexually abuse girls, they do believe that sexual abuse is the ultimate consequence of a propagated morality which "devalues women and makes them inferior to men."

The authors discover, while seeking answers to the second question, that the impact of a religious upbringing on these

women is powerful. Guilt, repression, and anger are all ingredients in the traumas experienced by these women. Many felt guilt because the abusers convinced them that the abuse was their own fault (after all, the victim tempted the abuser). This absurd claim was used by several of the offenders who would then use the story of Adam and Eve and other stories in the Bible, depicting women as temptresses and sinners, to justify the abuses inflicted on them. Because of this guilt, and the conviction that no one would believe them, the victims were reduced to silence, repression and anger, which they carry with them to this day.

Mothers were usually powerless in these situations, as they too had been taught to be subservient to men. Thus, these girls had very few places to turn for help or advice. Naturally, the church was of little or no help; most tended either not to believe the victim or to try and minimize the abuse.

The authors conclude that there is indeed a connection between a strict Christian upbringing and sexual abuse of girls in the family. This fact would probably surprise few freethinkers, but, as stated before, this book may be the first of its kind to provide us with the actual documentation of what so many of us have long suspected. Christianity's patriarchal dogmas are unquestioningly the root cause.

On a heartening note, nine out of ten of these women ultimately became so disgusted with religion that they completely broke away from the church, although many of them were unable to totally free themselves from a belief in God. In these cases, however, their god becomes magically transformed from the patriarchal biblical god to a "kinder, gentler" force.

As they expose the Christian church, its hypocritical teachings, and blatant contempt toward women throughout its history, the authors make a final appeal to the church to acknowledge and change its sexist ways. By doing so, they offer hope to both Christian and non-Christian women alike in striving toward acquiring an equal position within the church and in society.



## Nelson to Speak

On Sunday, July 23, AU Copresident Jon Nelson will give a talk at the "Onion" Sepulveda Unitarian Universalist Society, 9550 Haskell Avenue, North Hills. The talk will be on "Morality, Relative or Absolute?" and will begin at 10:45 AM.

# Some Food For Thought

by Robert A. Richert

About once per month I gather a group of intellectual freethinkers to do lunch. Regular attendees include a professional writer and magician, a retired philosophy professor, a retired biology professor, and other friends who visit occasionally. We have some very interesting conversations. At our last luncheon, I asked the philosopher if it is true that the overwhelming majority of professionals in his field are nontheists. He replied affirmatively. Professional philosophers are experts on issues relevant to the existence of God. If these experts are mostly non-theistic, it is axiomatic that they have good reasons to be so. The freethought community should exploit this fact. I wonder if any polls have determined the percentage of theists to nontheists, amongst their ranks? All of this inspired me to write this paper and to pose some questions and comment on related issues: Is theism still intellectually credible? Is philosophy the sole domain for questions regarding the existence of God? What is the role of human emotion versus reason in relationship to belief? The answers to these and other related questions are important to the freethought community.

Before lunch I was under the impression that all philosophical arguments for the existence of God had been soundly thrashed, leaving educated theists retreating into "Faith" as justification for belief. My friend was quick to point out that a small contingent of conservative, theistic professional philosophers has earned the respect of their peers. They are not crackpots that one can dismiss lightly. Alston, Plantinga and Swinburne are prominent representatives of this group. A few "disciples" of these philosophers often attend Center for Inquiry meetings in Costa Mesa. One must be well versed in logic and vanguard philosophy to debate with these bright believers. Their arguments seem novel and sound compelling.

I suspect, however, that at least some of these "novel" versions are just the tired old cosmological, teleological, etc., arguments with new packaging. My suspicions became aroused because of recent creationist tactics. Their advocates lost major court cases during the 1980's because critics easily demonstrated the obvious religion behind Creation Science. Now, the creationists use terms such as, "Intelligent Design Theory," "Abrupt Appearance Theory," etc., in an attempt to pass constitutional scrutiny by sounding purely scientific. Are these modern theistic philosophers using similar tactics? Are they using more esoteric language and convoluted arguments which, when stripped bare, say essentially the same things that Aquinas and others said centuries ago? Are they motivated by something other than an objective search for truth? Considering the continuous retreat of theism intellectually in the last few centuries, I'm doubtful that this new brand will turn the tide. These "bright believers" represent a tiny

minority of the religious population.

While most theists are not light-hearted (they are passionate) about their beliefs, experience tells me that most are light-headed when confronted to defend their beliefs rationally. I'm amazed by the poor arguments and sloppy thinking that I hear over and over again. Part of this stems from societal prohibitions against talking about religion in everyday life, and part is due to lack of education. This brings up an interesting question: If the general public were required to take extensive philosophy courses would belief in God decline significantly? I suspect that belief would decline but not to the point where most people became nontheists to the degree of professional philosophers. Why? Perhaps philosophical justification is a minor component of human religiosity.

Skeptic Magazine publisher Michael Shermer recently conducted an interesting survey in which he asked a large sample of people, 1. "Why do you believe in God?" and 2. "Why do you think that other people believe in God?" To the latter question, most responded that others believe based upon emotion, but for themselves, most respondents claimed to be compelled by the argument from design... in other words, "The other guy believes by means of his emotions but I believe because the order and complexity of the universe demand a rational explanation, and for me that explanation is God."

Shermer's survey indicates that most people do harbor rational (or at least what they perceive to be rational) justification for their beliefs. However, when most people talk about God they tend to use emotion-laden rather than objective or scientific language; for example, "God gives meaning to my life." "He loves me and I love Him." "I feel His presence," etc. All the above strongly suggests that philosophical justification for belief is subliminal to the emotional anchor that belief provides. Human emotional need often overwhelms the ability to reason, ask anyone who has bought a new car. This might explain why people retain beliefs that are demonstrably false, and why some professional philosophers still cling to theism. For deeper understanding, one must move beyond philosophy into the behavioral sciences. Volumes have been written about the psychology of religion. The behavioral sciences will eventually reveal more insight about why people maintain religious beliefs that are out of step with current knowledge.

One of our luncheon regulars is a biologist. He likes to say that humans have a brain evolved for hunter-gathering onto which has recently been plastered a thin veneer of civilization. It does seem amazing to most freethinkers that traditional religious beliefs are still very much a part of our culture, despite their intellectual obsolescence. Perhaps the biologist is on to something. Now, that is food for thought!



# Atheists Speak Out!

## Atheists United's Annual Speech Contest

July 23rd, 2000 • 1:00 p.m.

**Who:** All members of Atheists United may participate, as well as those who may not be members but are in accord with Atheists United's aims and purposes. AU members will be given priority over non-members if the number of speakers has to be limited due to time considerations.

**What:** The contest will be in two parts:  
Part 1: Short, 1 to 2 minute "sound off" type speeches;  
Part 2: Longer, 5 to 7 minute speeches for those who want to speak in greater depth on a subject.  
Your speech ( or speeches if you enter both contests) should be on a topic related to atheism or the separation between government and religion.  
The contest will be judged by the rules of Toastmasters International. Winners will receive a variety of trophies and prizes.

**When:** At the July 23rd, 2000 general meeting of Atheists United.

**Where:** Center for Inquiry West, 5519 Grosvenor Blvd., Los Angeles near the Marina.

**Why:** To give atheists and other freethinkers a chance to speak out on issues important to them. We hope to videotape your speech ( only with your permission) and broadcast them to a wider audience thru our cable TV outreach program.

**DEADLINE FOR ENTRY: JULY 5TH, 2000**

**How:** To enter, fill out the entry form and send it to our address:  
Atheists United • P.O. Box 57435 • Sherman Oaks CA 91413-2435  
or by e-mail to: [Mark1377@juno.com](mailto:Mark1377@juno.com)  
All entrants will be sent additional information about contest rules and suggestions about speech preparation.

### *Some Thoughts on the Contest*

If you are not an experienced public speaker don't be afraid to participate. Winning or losing is not as important as saying what you have to say. The contest will be videotaped for our public access cable television project. You can choose to be videotaped or not.

Our monthly meetings and cable TV shows are some of the few places where atheistic views can be heard. That is why we hope the speeches will have plenty of atheism related content. Here are some suggestions:

How you became an atheist • The bible vs women • Church and State issues • Humorous looks at religious texts or paranormal beliefs • Historical horrors committed in the name of religion • Personal experiences with intolerant religious persons • Great Freethought books

### ENTRY FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to speak in :     1-2 minute contest     5-7 minute contest     Both contests

(Optional) Title(s) of your speech/speeches:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Free food, fun, friends

Free thought

# Lots o' LAFFs

Yes, the name has changed (it was the *Los Angeles Alliance of Atheists, Humanists and Ethical Culture Organizations*), but the picnic is the same.

The Los Angeles Freethought Federation sponsors the annual summer get-together for freethinking folk—

Saturday, August 12, at 11:00 a.m.

Roxbury Park 471 Roxbury Dr. (at Olympic) in Beverly Hills

**The food is free!\***

Bring a friend.

Bring a dessert, if you wish.

☸ Once again, we play Lillian Brem's game, "Help! There's a Freethinker on my back!"

☸ Once again, we model our best T-shirts for the Best T-Shirt Contest.

\* Once again, we eat the free food and walk the free walk, talk the free talk and think the free thoughts.

\*Food furnished by LAFF.

Drinks generously donated by Stan Unger.

Continued from page 2

A non-stone might be many things. On the other hand, asexual does not leave many alternatives to sexual. Consider what a non-man might be. Is that a satisfactory identification of something? No. We haven't solved whether our nonman is "animal, vegetable or mineral." Not even if it self-identifies itself as a "nonman" or an "a-man." The latter consideration seems to imply sentience, self-awareness, and capability of communication by use of abstract symbols. That would seem to narrow the identity of a non-man or an a-man down to a human being beyond infancy and with a sound mind. A non-man is not a dog or chimpanzee, if it is able conceptualize and say it is "non-man."

Fewer than 20 questions are necessary. But a nonman might be a boy. Or might be a woman, or a girl, or even a talking machine, a record or an audio tape, a telephone, or an echo, or a parrot.

Are there likewise a variety of things that one could be without being a theist?

Can a person who is not a theist believe in supernatural rays in the atmosphere—brainless and purposeless, having no design? Or can he believe in the beautiful sunlight—believe and worship it as a divine force—and yet be a non-theist, or an a-theist? Can he believe that his mind is controlled by earth-aliens or all those about him are earth-aliens or mind snatchers, while not being a theist?

Have we defined ourselves by saying that we do not believe that there is a god or gods? Does atheist mean nontheist, nothing more or less?

## Looking Into the Eye Of the Question

If we define ourselves by saying what we are not, doesn't that act invite god-believers or other atheists to imagine that atheists may lack something, something which other people, who do not append a- to their generic name, have? Doesn't that definition of us reduce us, make us incomplete beings, at least implicitly, in a way of conceiving ourselves?

In short, can we not make a position statement of what we are without invoking by word what we consider to be, nothing, a nonentity?

We are not lackers, partial beings like the half of an egg which Plato conceived a man or a woman to be. Believers in or worshippers of the supernatural are defectives. They lack discrimination, accurate judgment, logic, a sense of the preposterous, an assured grasp of reality and truth. If they are deluded so as to be unable to distinguish between reality and supernatural voices or metaphysical images of their mind, they lack sanity.

Continued on page 8

## Name the Newsletter Update

With fewer than ten ballots received, the Name the Newsletter contest is ended with no change. The \$50 prize to the entry receiving the most votes will be announced at the Awards Banquet September 9.

Because we believe it speaks to other freethought issues as well, we decided to go ahead and run Mike's opinion piece.

— Editor

## Accuracy or Wit

By Mike Jordan

It's important that we choose a newsletter name that points us in a positive direction, rather than alluding to our religious opposites. The biggest reason Atheists United's membership remains small in spite of its terrific ideas and brilliant members is our fixation on our negative identity, rather than offering something positive to potential members.

We define ourselves by what we are not, rather than what we are. Most of us identify with the "atheist" moniker, because that's the most useful word that comes close to describing us, which most people are likely to understand. However, we must also recognize its negating lexicology.

I would prefer to divest myself of any wording involving the concept of theism, and hope we choose a name for our internal newsletter that publicizes an affirmative, attractive, positive vision of our accurate reality. My favorites are: *Beacon*, *Explorer*, *Lighthouse*, and I'm torn between *Reality Check* or *Logical Enquirer*. Accuracy or wit. Hmm. Now, those are attractive characteristics.

I have to admit that even my submission, "The Ultimate Authority," carries a sting of condescension to religionists. Despite being very clever, names like: *Relief*, *The Blind Watchmaker*, *The Gospel Truth*, *Nothing on Faith*, and *Nihilum ex Machina* all fixate on our nemesis rather than reach toward new friends.

While we realists (if I may offer a new moniker) are being victimized in a battle of words and laws, what fresh young idealist is gonna hop on board a vessel at war? Despite their creativity and our devilish delight in them, names such as *The Good Fight*, *Iconoclast*, *Infidel*, *No Excuses*, and *Nobody's Voice* will keep strangers at a distance.

I would even go so far as to say that our officers should make a very undemocratic, executive decisions and limit our choices to positive names. We need to shape the future of Atheists United toward success, if we are to win over those who have yet to wake up.

# What's in a name?

By Don Latimer

When asked to define atheist, the most common is a-, without + theos, god, without god. This is a very passive tone. I would call it submissive. I urge you to never use it. It also implies you need something you don't have. The next step up is "I don't believe in god." This is still passive. Many years ago an English teacher urged me to not use a passive voice. I didn't really understand why until very recently. Next comes "I think (or I believe) there is no god." That is as mild as we ever need to be. I prefer think because it implied a rational process and believe has no such implication. When asked if a god exists the only possible answers are yes, no, and I don't know. Our only answer is no. Yes and I don't know cannot apply to an atheist. When theists argue about this idea of a god and that idea of a god they are using trickery and manipulation if they don't believe in those gods. Except in very rare situations theists only believe in a creator god that can be talked to.

I think we should use "there is no god." Yes, I know that is too much for our membership at this time. I would like for the members to say in unison at the start of meetings "I am an atheist" followed by "there is no god". Yes, I know that is too much also.

## Tippit: What is an Atheist?

*Continued from page 7*

If they lack the normal use of their senses and natural judgment, they lack the truth.

Positive words to replace atheism or atheist have been used: realist, rationalist, humanist, agnostic (another negative).

As I like to use it, the word atheism is a positive. It is a belief or a conviction that, "There is no god – and never was." Note that I say, "I believe..." not, "I do not believe there is a god." There is a difference. One could be completely apathetic and believe nothing. Or one could say, "I don't believe there is a god. I never think about it."

I believe that there is no god. Note the word "believe" That is not absolute certainty, not unchangeability--for I might possibly be persuaded in circumstance inconceivable to me now that there is a god. I try to keep my mind open and my mental options free. If as seems to me the NONexistence of a teleological god above the known laws of nature cannot be demonstrated beyond all doubt. I consider my belief a theory, even more certain (if that is possible) than the main discoveries and apprehension which support it, the theory of evolution.

Thus atheism to me is not a negation. It is more than its name. It is belief in reality.

Atheist means something other than a creature, an object created. Looking in my book of antonyms under "creature" I find CREATOR. Good!

I can use that.

That's what an atheist is.


  
**I want to help**
  
**build a Rational Alternative for all Americans!**

Please charge the following pledge amount to my Visa or MasterCard on the  3rd  18th of each month.

\$100  \$50  \$25  \$10  Other amount over \$10: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute to Atheists United with a one-time gift. Please charge my Visa or MasterCard with the gift amount of:

\$1000  \$500  \$250  \$100  \$50  Other amount over \$10: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa/MasterCard number: \_\_\_\_\_ expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature X \_\_\_\_\_

Monthly pledges are for a period of one year. You will receive notification of renewal time, but your pledge will be automatically renewed for the same amount unless you choose to change it. Your pledge can be cancelled at any time with 15 days notice before the transaction date by writing to Atheists United, PO Box 57435, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-2435, or by calling the office at (818) 785-1743.

*Thank you for your generous support of Atheists United.*

# Meetings of Allied Freethought Organizations

## Meeting Dates, Times, Phone Numbers

AUGen - Atheists United General Meeting: Fourth Sunday, except December. 11:00 AM, board meeting, 12:15PM, social hour; 1:00PM, meeting. Center for Inquiry West, 5519 Grosvenor. Info: (818) 785-1743.

AUOC - Atheists United Orange County: Brunch. Second Sunday, 10:30AM, Irvine Ranch House Restaurant (formerly Jolly Roger's), 1727 E. Dyer Rd., Irvine, one block east of 55 Freeway. Info: David (714) 220-1777 or e-mail: ocou@thinkdontpanic.com.

AUSFV - Atheists United San Fernando Valley: Discussion Group. Third Wednesday. 7PM IHOP Restaurant, 6429 Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys, one block N. of Victory Blvd. Info: Sam (818) 993-1353.

AUSLO - Atheists United San Luis Obispo: 3rd Saturday, 3PM. County/City Library. Info: Peggy (805) 544-1580.

AyoUth - Young Atheists Coffee Night, Mondays 8:00 p.m. Lulu's Alibi, 1640 Sawtelle (just south of Santa Monica Bl.) Info: Matt (310) 993 4876 or Monica (310) 383-8409.

ECLA - Ethical Culture Society of Los Angeles: First and Third Sundays, 11:00 AM, Children's Community School Auditorium, 14702 Sylvan Street, Van Nuys. Info: (310) 470-2873.

FTM - Freethinkers Toastmasters: Second and Fourth Saturdays, 2PM. CFIW, 5519 Grosvenor. Info: David: (310)479-6318.

GALAH - Gay and Lesbian Atheists and Humanists: First Sunday, 1:00 p.m., The Village Gay and Lesbian Center; Room 135; N. Mc Cadden Place Los Angeles, Info: Ken: (818) 500-9858

HALA - Humanist Association of Los Angeles: Third Sunday, 2:30PM, MGM Center, Colorado & Cloverfield, Santa Monica. Info: (213) 876-9036.

SHJ-Society for Humanistic Judaism, Third Friday Info: (213) 891-4303.

SHOLA - Secular Humanists of Los Angeles: First Sundays, 11:00AM, Center for Inquiry West, 5519 Grosvenor. Info: (310) 371-8469.

## Freethought "Links"

For those of you who are connected to the Internet, check out the following websites!

- au.atheism.org
- AU's Website
- www.atheistalliance.org
- Atheist Alliance
- www.slonet.org/~ipauslo
- AU San Luis Obispo
- www.egroups.com
- Join the *atheistsuniting* eGroup discussion

### Board member email addresses:

- Bobbie Kirkhart: Bkirkhart@aol.com
- Jon Nelson: jonanelson@earthlink.net
- AU Office/Margie Farber: margief2@juno.com
- Henry Farber: margief2@juno.com
- Harvey Tippit: harrip@earthlink.net
- Ken Bonnell: Khbonnell@aol.com
- Monica Davis: ironica@iname.com
- Steve Gage: steven.s.gage@boeing.com
- Mark Rockoff: mark1377@juno.com
- Rachel Sene: nontheist@mail.com
- Newsletter contribution: Bkirkhart@aol.com

## Membership Form

I support the aims and purposes of Atheists United which are to keep state and church separate, and to promote atheism. I apply for membership in Atheists United including a monthly Newsletter at the Level indicated:

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of other family members: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature X \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Method  Cash or Check  Visa/Mastercard number \_\_\_\_\_ expiration \_\_\_\_\_

- Life Member @ \$500
  - Regular Member @ \$30 per year
  - Family Membership @ \$45 per year
  - Sustaining Member @ \$100 per year
  - Limited Income Membership – call or write for details
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- (requires two signatures)

Newsletter Subscription Only @ \$12.50 per year/\$20.00 outside the U.S. (does not include membership, no signature required.)

Send Check or Money Order To: Atheists United, P.O. Box 57435, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413-2435

### AU Cable TV Listings

*AU is currently reorganizing our Public Access Outreach effort. During this time there may be some interruption in programming. Please bear with us.*

Media One, Hollywood	Ch.37	Sunday	1:30 P.M.
Media One, Verdugo Hills	Ch.19	Monday	8:30 P.M.
Adelphia, Beverly Hills	Ch.37	Sunday	Between 9-11:30 A.M.
Adelphia, Marina	Ch.3	Sunday	Between 9-11:30 A.M.
Adelphia, West Hollywood	Ch.3	Sunday	Between 9-11:30 A.M.
Adelphia, All Others	Ch.77	Sunday	Between 9-11:30 A.M.

#### Out of State- Greater Seattle Area

Washington	Ch.29	1st Sunday	6 P.M.
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*STUN (Superstition, Talking Snakes, Unjust Taxes & Nonsense) Program*

Charter Cable, Long Beach	Ch. 65	Tuesday	4:30 p.m.
		Friday	8:30 p.m.

*Would you like to see our programming on your local cable public access? Call the office to help! We need local residents in areas in order to get our programming on the air!*

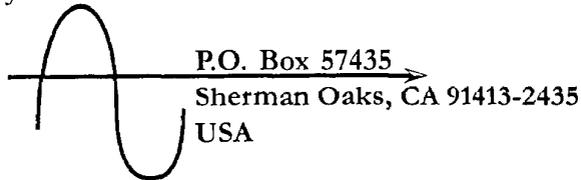
### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Co-president's Message: Lessons from the History Books ..... Pg 1  
 General Meeting July 23: Speech Contest! ..... Pg 1  
 Name the Newsletter Update..... Pg 7

#### things to do:

- Enter speech contest – Entry form inside
- Go to Alliance LAFF Picnic – See insert
- Volunteer for outreach in Venice or Santa Monica

JULY 2000



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U.S. Constitution, First Amendment:

*“Congress Shall Make No Law Respecting an Establishment of Religion...”*